

BATES DAZZLES AS WYCOMBE CLIP THE PEGASUS WINGS

By Argus

Wycombe Wanderers 5

Pegasus 1

IT was Bates who dazzled at Loakes Park on Saturday as famous international-bedecked Pegasus, holders of the name of the mythological flying-horse, had their wings clipped by one of the most gifted displays of inside-forward craft seen on the ground for ages.

On this showing Bates is destined to become as great a goalkeeper's nightmare at inside-left as he was at centre-forward. He scored two grand opportunist goals, teed up with another for Peter James and generally played havoc with the Pegasus defenders.

Just to make the Bates day complete, watching this Amateur Football Alliance semi-final game were Football Association representatives I. M. Sorensen and Norman Creek.

CRACKING FORM

But this fabulous Wycombe win was very far from being a lone-wolf performance. The whole team was in cracking form, the defence covering crisply—beautifully marshalled by Ken Crook—the forwards hurtling forward relentlessly in goal-ravenous mood.

Goalkeeper Skelton, an admirable successor to the mighty Pinner, must have felt like King Canute sweeping back the sea. He kept out at least half a dozen certainties with fantastic saves and was practically carried over the goal-line by a thunderbolt blast from Dennis Atkins.

Happy Wanderers could afford to flip away their chances. Toiling tirelessly, Cliff Trott was particularly reckless with his scoring chances and came in for more than his share of criticism from the crowd.

PERSEVERANCE

But game Cliff always makes his mark somehow. Besides scoring a first half goal he carved out a net-busting chance for Dennis Atkins by sheer guts and perseverance.

Delicate ball control and distribution by Ron Fryer was a delight to watch. Equally good, in its own way, was the highly competent performance of Ken Crook, deputising for the injured John Fisher. Unassuming Ken was the "quiet man" of the Wycombe defence. Cutting out the dramatics he was always on the spot to check the tearaway Grayson.

So many shots were pelted at the Pegasus goal that Skelton was almost continually in action. Wanderers, finding their touch from the kick-off, had a quick success when Bates, picking up a "gem" pass from Jimmy Truett cleverly lobbed the ball over the goalkeeper and into the net.

The Pegasus defence was in a real tizzy against an attack which even found time to experiment. One superb piece of dribbling by Bates, after he had accelerated past full back Dougall, laid on a chance-in-a-million for Trott but Cliff failed to shoot in time.

Lone threat to Ken Brown in the Wycombe goal seemed to be Randle, the stocky electric little Pegasus inside-right.

With Wanderers so much in the saddle goals had to come but thanks to Skelton the score was only 2-0 at the break, Trott scoring from close range after working a move with James.

Up against a big experienced player in international Dougall, Gerald Free showed a brisk turn of speed and an ability to shoot from acute angles. At least three shots from him sent Skelton tumbling to save.

Atkins's speed and super-sonic centres worried Pegasus not a little and from one of his sorties, early in the second half, Skelton had to parry a Trott effort in brilliant fashion. He had no chance with a 55th minute shot from Atkins, which tore into the net after Trott had glued to the ball through two tackles.

Goal number four came from Bates who ended a run through the centre with a casual flick past the goal keeper but goal number five—the best of the match—was the match-winning effort which really caught the Loakes Park fancy.

Bates sent two off-balance Pegasus defenders sprawling on their backs with a glittering touchline dribble and gave Peter James an easy crack at a yawning wide goal.

Randle's consolation goal for Pegasus was well deserved but Wycombe, who showed wonderful form from start to finish, have seldom had an easier victory over their distinguished rivals.